NIH POLICY MANUAL

54101 ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ACTIVITIES AND ACTIVITY CODES

ISSUING OFFICE: OER, OPERA - Phone: 435-0949

Release Date: 1/15/01

1.   **Explanation of Material Transmitted:** This chapter has been revised to update the process (and makes it fully electronic) for the development, clearance, and authorization of new activities and activity codes used to formally identify various mechanisms of support (grant, cooperative agreement, and contract) used in the extramural programs of the NIH. Responsibility for this function is now with OER, OPERA.

2.   **Filing Instructions:**

Remove: NIH Manual 54101/6304-2 dated 12/28/92

Insert: NIH Manual Chapter 54101/6304-2 dated 01/15/01

PLEASE NOTE: For information on:

?? Content of this chapter, contact the issuing office listed above.

?? NIH Manual System, contact the Office of Management Assessment, OA, on 496-2832.

?? On-line information, enter this URL: http://www3.od.nih.gov/oma/manualchapters/

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW ACTIVITIES AND ACTIVITY CODES

A. PURPOSE:

This chapter describes the process to be followed for development, clearance, and authorization of new activities and activity codes used to formally identify various mechanisms of support/funding (grant, cooperative agreement, or contract) used in the extramural programs of the NIH.

B. BACKGROUND:

There have been several changes in the process of establishing activities and activity codes.

?? Elimination of the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) in the establishment process.

?? Inclusion of the Director, OEP in clearance process.

?? Notation that the second and third activity code character may be alpha or numeric.

?? Implementation of an electronic process to establish activities and activity codes.

Traditionally the establishment of new Activities and Activity Codes process used the NIH Mail and a walk through delivery system. In response to increased technology, use of e-mail, the paper reduction act and reinventing government, the Activity Codes process is now facilitated electronically.

C. POLICY:

An Information for Management, Planning, Analysis and Coordination (IMPAC) activity code is broad in nature and intended to transcend an IC's scientific program or program initiative. A proposed new activity code should differ significantly from other activity codes in order to justify and require separate identification and accountability.

Generally, the following criteria are taken into consideration in establishing a new activity or activity code within the NIH:

1. Financial support/funding mechanism to be used (grant, cooperative agreement or contract).

2. Regulatory, legislative, administrative, or scientific requirements for special accountability and reporting.

3. Special budgetary consideration.

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4. Special requirements for overall assignment, referral, or review of applications/proposals.

5. Special requirements for changing or mandating contract programs.

This issuance sets forth the establishment of new activities and activity codes process electronically. The clearance process is handled by using an electronic file copy memo. The memo includes a name/office/date box. The IMPAC activity code process is routed via e-mail.

D. DEFINITIONS:

1. ACTIVITY - A broad group or category applied to various NIH funding mechanisms for the purpose of tracking, special reporting, and accountability; for example, the "R" category covers several types of research projects (e.g., R01, R29, R37, R55, etc.), whereas, the "F" activity category covers various types of fellowship grants (e.g., F32, F35, etc.) and the "N" activity category covers various types of contracts.

2. ACTIVITY CODE - A code assigned by the NIH to identify a generically similar group of support programs. An activity code consists of three characters. The first is alphabetic; the second and third may be alphabetic or numeric (e.g., R01 - Research Project [Traditional]; U01 - Research Project [Cooperative Agreement]; N01 - Research and Development Contracts [Contract]; RC1 - NIH Challenge Grants and Partnerships Program - Phase I [Research and Development Grant]). The activity code is an integral part of the NIH document numbering system**.**

3. Electronic Dissemination - Information that is sent throughout the NIH via e-mail. The official files to be used in the establishment of new Activities and Activity Codes process are managed electronically in the Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA) and in the IMPAC II database. Contract activity codes shall also be established and managed by OPERA.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The awarding components select the most appropriate activity code for any initiative, such as new Program Announcements (PAs), Requests for Applications (RFAs), or Requests for Proposals (RFPs). If existing activity codes seem inappropriate, an Office, Institute or Center (IC) may recommend the establishment of a new code. A concise, written definition and justification must accompany each recommendation for a new activity code.

2. To avoid use of the same code for different activities, the Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA), OER, OD receives all requests for new activities or activity codes electronically, coordinates the internal electronic clearance of code assignments, and maintains them in an IMPAC database.

    a. Requests for a new NIH contract activity code should be sent via e-mail to the

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Director of the Office of Acquisition Management and Policy (OAMP), OA, OD. The Director, OAMP e-mails the request (along with a recommendation) to OPERA who coordinates code assignments in the IMPAC System. The OPERA forwards the request and a recommendation through the Director of the Office of Extramural Programs (OEP), OER, OD to the NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research (DDER), OER, OD for a final decision. The e-mail system is used to send the request through the clearance process.

b. Requests for a new NIH grant or cooperative agreement activity code should be e-mailed to the Director of the Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA), OER, OD for review, recommendation and is then routed through the Director of the Office of Extramural Programs (OEP), OER, OD to the NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research (DDER), OER, OD for a final decision. The e-mail system is used to send the request through the clearance process.

3. The DDER shall establish all new NIH activity categories or activity codes and notifies the OPERA via e-mail. The DOPERA notifies the requester of the DDER's final decision to establish or not to establish the proposed activity or activity code.

F. PROCEDURES:

If an IC determines that an initiative is sufficiently different from any existing activity code and that the initiative requires special reporting and accountability, then the IC must prepare a memorandum to the Director Office of Acquisition Management and Policy (OAMP), OA, OD or the Director of the Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA), OER, OD.

The IC prepared memorandum for a new activity code should concisely justify the reason for the new activity code and provide its proposed title and definition along with the Administering Code. The memo must also include the Activity Budget Account Codes and Descriptions, and the Budget Research Grant Category *(Note: this last requirement does not apply to contract activity codes.)*

The memo is sent electronically to the Director of OAMP or of OPERA. OAMP forwards all contract activity and activity code requests along with recommendations to the OPERA. The OPERA will review the request and forward it and recommendations to the Director of OEP. The Director of OEP then forwards it and recommendations to the DDER for a final decision. OPERA will prepare a memorandum announcing the DDER's final decision. A copy of this memorandum shall be sent to the OAMP. All correspondence regarding the activity code request is sent by e-mail.

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G. RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSAL:

All records (e-mail and non-e-mail) pertaining to this chapter must be retained and disposed of under the authority of NIH Manual 1743,"Keeping and Destroying Records, Appendix 1, NIH Records Control Schedule," Item 4000-A-2 (IMPAC), Item 1100-B-1 (Policy), and Item 1100-F-1 (NIH Directives).

NIH e-mail messages. NIH e-mail messages (messages, including attachments, that are created on NIH computer systems or transmitted over NIH networks) that are evidence of the activities of the agency or have informational value are considered Federal records. **These records must be maintained in accordance with current NIH Records Management guidelines. If necessary, back-up file capability should be created for this purpose.**

All e-mail messages are considered Government property, and, if requested for a legitimate Government purpose, must be provided to the requester. Employees' supervisors, NIH staff conducting official reviews or investigations, and the Office of Inspector General may request access to or copies of the e-mail messages. E-mail messages must also be provided to Congressional oversight committees if requested and are subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. Since most e-mail systems have back-up files that are retained for significant periods of time, e-mail messages and attachments are likely to be retrievable from a back-up file after they have been deleted from an individual's computer. The back-up files are subject to the same requests as the original messages.

H. MANAGEMENT CONTROLS:

The purpose of this manual issuance is to describe the electronic process to be followed for development, clearance, and authorization of new activities and activity codes used to formally identify various mechanisms of support used in the extramural programs of the NIH.

1. Office Responsible for Reviewing Management Controls Relative to this Chapter: The Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA), Office of Extramural Research (OER), Office of the Director (OD), is accountable for the method used to ensure that management controls in activities and activity codes administration are implemented.

2. Frequency of Review: Ongoing reviews will occur as scheduled or on an ad hoc basis.

3. Method of Review: OPERA will monitor this activity for grants and coordinate with OAMP with regard to contracts.

4. Review Reports are sent to: Deputy Director for Extramural Research (DDER)

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I.   PUBLICATIONS AND DISTRIBUTION:

The User Support Branch (USB), DEIS, OPERA, OER, OD, will maintain a manual entitled Activity Codes, Organization Codes, and Definitions Used in Extramural Programs on the web at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/ac.pdf .

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APPENDIX 1 – ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, AND FORMS

CSR-Center for Scientific Review
DDER-Deputy Director for Extramural Research
DEIS-Division of Extramural Information Systems
DOAMP – Director of the Office Acquisition Management and Policy
DOPERA – Director of the Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration
IC- Office, Institute or Center
IMPAC-Information for Management, Planning, Analysis and Coordination
OAMP-Office of Acquisition Management and Policy
OD- Office of the Director
OEP-Office of Extramural Programs
OER-Office of Extramural Research
OPERA -Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration
PA - Program Announcements
RFA-Request for Applications
RFP-Request for Proposals
USB-User Support Branch

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APPENDIX 2 – DIRECTORY

Deputy Director for Extramural Research
Building One, Room 144
496-1096

Director, Office of Extramural Research
Rockledge Two, Suite 6182
435-2768

Director, Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration
Rockledge One, Suite 1190
435-0949

Director, Office of Acquisition Management and Policy
6100 Executive Blvd., Room 6D01
496-4422

User Support Branch
Rockledge One, Suite 1025
435-0996